Put away with 3434/17

P 7
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H 3753
(3855
3434)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote

No. 180643/1917/F10.

and address—
The Under-Secretary of State
Foreign Office,
London.

Indexed.

*The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for* India *and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.*

*Foreign Office,*

September 21, 1917.

Circulated with 3875

*Reference to previous correspondence:*

*Letter to / from* *Foreign Office:*

Copy to India
8 Nov. 1917

*Description of Inclosure.*

| Name and Date. | Subject. |
|---|---|
| Foreign Office to War Office Sept. 21, 1917 | Proposed use of Chinese Troops in Egypt. |

RECEIVED IN
22 SEP 1917
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

*(Similar letter sent to* Middle East Committee*)*

Copy.
(180643/F.10/17.)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.I.

September 21st, 1917.

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Sir:-

With reference to War Office letter 083/5057.A. (M.O.1.) of September 6th, 1917, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Balfour to forward to you, herewith, for your information and for any observations which the Army Council may desire to offer copies of correspondence as marked in the margin relative to the employment of Chinese troops in Egypt.

Mr. Balfour directs me to add that this Department strongly deprecates their employment on either the Egyptian or the Aden front and that the presence of Chinese troops in Mesopotamia appears to be equally objectionable.

Mr. Balfour is supported in this view by the majority of the Middle East Committee who have asked that no decision to employ Chinese troops in Egypt should be taken without reference to them.

I am,
Sir,
Your most obedient
humble Servant,

W. Langley (sd)

e Secretary

to the Army Council.

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P 3853 1917

Copy to India 18 Oct

(174515).

EGYPT.

MILITARY.

Cypher telegram to Sir R.Wingate (Cairo).

Foreign Office, September 12th, 1917. 11.40 p.m.

No. 889.

.....

His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Peking has reported that the Chinese Government will probably offer shortly to provide Chinese troops for employment in Europe.

Tonnage difficulties make such employment impossible but War Office suggest that a Mixed Brigade of Chinese troops might usefully be employed in Egypt. Brigade to be of all arms and under its own Chinese officers a British Mission being attached for training and advisory purposes.

We should be glad of your observations on this suggestion.

RECEIVED IN * POLITICAL DEPAR 22 SEP 1917

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P 3853 1917

EGYPT.

MILITARY.

Decypher. Sir R.Wingate (Rambeh) September 15th, 1917.
D. 8.15 p.m. September 15th, 1917.
R. 8 a.m. September 16th, 1917.

No. 971.

Copy to India 180d

.....

Your telegram No. 889.

In consulting Commander-in-Chief on this proposal I observed that Egyptians would be unlikely to welcome Chinese troops in Egypt proper. Their employment would be interpreted as a sign of British weakness. Moreover Egyptians would resent our entrusting maintenance of order in the country to soldiers of another oriental nation which formed no part of the Empire. I therefore enquired whether Commander-in-Chief would be able to employ them on the Eastern Front or on lines of communication.

Following is text of his telegraphic reply.

Begins.

"My situation is that I should find it difficult to maintain more troops owing to strain on my lines of communication. I am quite in the dark as to fighting value of these troops. I am even ignorant of their reliability as lines of communication troops. Am therefore not disposed to accept them as they might prove useless mouths. No other military objection except that small force of these troops might weaken our prestige by giving enemy in this

theatre

RECEIVED IN 22 SEP 1917 POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

theatre excuse for saying that their arrival proves exhaustion of our own resources".

Objections set forth above would not, I think, apply to employment of these troops at Aden and in view of desirability of taking early action against Turks at Lahej I would suggest that Chinese brigade be sent to Aden provided General Officer Commanding there concurred.

I should be glad to learn by telegraph what is finally decided.

Indexed.

Mr Shuckburgh

Please have this typed
& sent as soon as possible.

CAA

20/9/17

Fair typed copies on
foot paper, please.

JEJ 20/9

Copies sent to Sir M. Sykes
+ Sir R Graham (7.0.)

= Post-bag

JEJ
20/9/17.

✓ M

3434

For usual mail

P
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W. 3535
3434

With reference to the draft telegram to His Majesty's Ambassador, Washington, Mr. Montagu desires to say that from the Indian point of view it appears to him to be politically undesirable and militarily useless to employ Chinese troops on any - even minor - front on which British or Indian troops are employed.

While the other points mentioned in Sir C. Spring Rice's telegram do not concern India, Mr. Montagu observes that the draft reply does not deal with them.

India Office,

20th September 1917.

INDIA OFFICE

P
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S/S.
20/9 9. W. H

Rec'd 20/9

With reference to the draft telegram to H. M. Ambr, Washington, Mr Montagu desires to say that from the Indian point of view it appears to him to be politically undesirable & militarily useless to employ Chinese troops on any - even minor - front on which British or Indian troops are employed.

While the other points mentioned in the Sir C. Spring Rice's telegram do not concern India, Mr Montagu observes that the draft reply does not deal with them.

India Office,
20th Sep. IX. 17.

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1917

Sir Arthur Hirtzel 6

SECRET

MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE.

I have been requested by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to circulate the following telegram from Washington No 2658 and draft of a reply subject to the concurrence of the Middle East Committee, it is proposed to return to His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington.

(Initialled) M. S.

Secretary.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.

18th September 1917.

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(THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT)

SECRET.

MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE.

MILITARY.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Decypher. Sir C. Spring Rice ( Washington),
September 12th, 1917.

D.
R. 3.0.p.m. September 13th, 1917.
No. 2658.

---

State Department unofficially ask your advice as to China, especially employment of:-

1. Man power for:

(a) Labour in France.

(b) Service in third line of trenches.

(c) As soldiers, either regular army or new regiments to be trained in France.

2. (?Resources) in coal and iron.

Would money be of use expended for these objects under American control?

If you concur in (1) from what provinces and how shall man power be drawn?

Above is merely tentative.

---

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MIDDLE EAST COMMITTEE.

SECRET.

PROPOSED DRAFT REPLY TO ATTACHED TELEGRAM.

It is understood that the Chinese Government will shortly make a definite offer of military assistance and we are now considering what reply shall be returned when the offer is made. It is suggested that we should accept the assistance of a mixed brigade under their own officers on one of the minor fronts. If this proposal is considered feasible and the transport difficulty can be met our acceptance would in any case be due rather to our desire not to offend Chinese susceptibilities than to our confidence in the fighting value of Chinese troops. Of the latter under their own officers we have no great opinion and to put in European officers, even if such were available, would, we consider, be liable to raise difficulties with one of the Allies.

Minute Paper.

Register No. 3535

Put away with 6 3434

S. Secret Department. 17

From F.O.

Dated 6 Sept. 1917.

Rec. 7 "

| To | Date. | Initials. | SUBJECT. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under Secretary.... | 10/9 | [illegible] | The War. |
| Secretary of State... | 10 | [illegible] | Proposal to employ Chinese troops in Europe. |
| Committee..... | | | |
| Under Secretary.... | | | |
| Secretary of State... | | | |

W.O. 1st

Copy to India. - 13 Sept.

Re-refer to him - see note below

Put by. 11/9

**FOR INFORMATION.**

To Secretary. Mil. W.O.

(We have not yet heard the views of the W.O. or F.O.)

7/9/17

Will you kindly return this file for Genl Sir H Cox to see about the middle of next week.

8/9/17

Seen thank you

HWCOX

13.9.17

*Previous Papers :—*

3424

21517 I 1500 2000 11/16

Indexed.

*Immediate and Confidential.* 171557/10F/17

P 3535 1917

W 3434

*The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to* the Under Secretary of State for India *, and is directed by the Secretary of State to transmit the accompanying copies of* a *telegram , as marked in the margin.* respecting the employment of Chinese troops in Europe

Telegram 402

*Foreign Office,*

September 6 , 1917.

RECEIVED IN POLITICAL DEPARTMENT 6 SEP 1917

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Indexed.

MILITARY.

CHINA.

Decypher. Mr. Alston (Peking) September 2nd,

D. 8.50.p.m. September 2nd, 1917.

R. 9.p.m.

No.402.

.....

P 3535 1917

My telegram No. 381.

Following from Military Attaché for Director of Military Intelligence:-

"I am informed by a member of recently formed Committee of National Defence that propcsal tc employ Chinese troops in Europe is under consideration of War Minister. This is corrcborrated by French Military Attaché whc states that official in confidence of Minister of War tcld him uncfficially recently that latter was in favcur of prcpcsal and wished tc knew whether it was practicable and would meet with French Government's apprcval.

General Acki's attitude appears tc be favcurable tc scheme provided that mcney and munitiens are provided by Allies and some Fcreign officers are attached. In ccnversation with me yesterday he perscnally introduced the subject advccating prcpcsal cn abcve conditions.

Articlcs advccating abcve are appearing daily in lccal press."

RECEIVED IN POLITICAL DEPARTMENT 6 SEP 1917

Put away with 691/7

P 3535

P 3535/17

Decypher from Mr. Alston (Peking)

D. 8.10
R. 9.30 p. m. September 4th, 1917.

To
Sir W. Langley.

------oOo------

Please see telegram from Military Attaché to Director of Military Intelligence of today's date.

As in the case of offer of naval assistance, from a political point of view acceptance of military assistance from China would undoubtedly produce same excellent impression here and assist in unifying country to the enhancement of British influence generally.

7 SEP 1917
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

Minute Paper.

Register No. P 3434 1917

Put away with 1917

S. Secret Department.

Letter from F.O.

Dated 23 Augt. 1917.
Rec.

| | Date. | Initials. | SUBJECT. |
|---|---|---|---|
| To Under Secretary.... | 25 Aug | J.L.J | The War |
| Secretary of State... | 28 | AHA | Entry of China: Offer of Chinese troops for active service |
| Committee..... | | | |
| Under Secretary.... | | | |
| Secretary of State... | | | |

Copy to

Copy to India
30 Aug.

FOR INFORMATION.

To the Secretary, Mil: Dept.

For information & any remarks.

J. Shuckburgh
24/8/17

If this is confined to the revival of our Chinese regt. & creation of others like it, well & good - but an incursion of ordinary Chinese troops into any of our theatres of war would be next door to a disaster.

H.O.Lock.
25.8.17.

The matter is one for the War Office

J.L.J. 25/8/17.

Not entirely. If the Chinese were allowed

Previous Papers :—

21517 I 1500 2000 11/16

& Zond troops & E. Africa or Egypt, this wd. almost certainly
followed by a demand from the Japanese & Zond troops – cf.
Italian attempt & Zond troops & Palestine & Hejaz (which is, however,
not a complete parallel); & this, if complied with, wd. be a
political disaster.

28/8/17

Immediate
and
Confidential. Ref: Letter from Foreign Office August 18

Indexed.

164504/101-/17

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The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India, and is directed by the Secretary of State to transmit the accompanying copies of a telegram, as marked in the margin. respecting Chinese Troops for the War.

Wang 381

Foreign Office,

August 23, 1917.

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23 AUG 1917
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

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CHINA

MILITARY

Decypher. Mr. Alston. (Pekin). August 21st.1917.
D. 5.10.p.m. August 21st.1917.
R. 8.0.a.m. August 22nd.1917.

No. 381.

---

Secret. My despatch 146 and Tokio despatch 413.

Councillor of Wai-Chiao-Pu who called on other matters from the Premier asked me to-day on his own account whether an offer to send Chinese troops to the war would be favourably regarded by His Majesty's Government.

I replied that on learning that Chinese Government wished to make suggestion I should be happy to ascertain views of His Majesty's Government on the subject.

Moment appears opportune for broaching idea of Chinese military participation either in the form of a revival of our own Chinese regiment or of acceptance of offer of small members of Chinese troops under British auspices for service say in German East Africa or Egypt.

If His Majesty's Government consider matter favourably I would propose to inform my Japanese Colleague and to discuss it with Premier.

RECEIVED IN
23 AUG 1917
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT